

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed November 3, 2006, in which claims 15–21 were withdrawn as being drawn to a non-elected species; claims 1, 5–7 and 11–14 were rejected, and claims 2–4 and 8–10 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim.

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 6 as anticipated by Kurano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,617,762) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Specifically, the Office Action states that Kurano et al. shows in FIGS. 9 and 10 an improvement that includes an encapsulant having a self-assembled monolayer [that] covers exposed surfaces of a component selected from the group consisting of a microactuator, a slider, a disc spacer, surface mount components on a printed circuit card assembly, ceramic components on a printed circuit card assembly, and ceramic components of the actuation system.

Kurano et al. discloses a coating film 16 that can be obtained by vapor deposition, where a thin, compact coating film of about 10 μm thick can be formed. (Kurano et al., col. 6, ll. 37–46; FIGS. 9 and 10). Kurano et al. neither teaches nor suggests an encapsulant comprised of a self-assembled monolayer as required by claims 1 and 6 (and by claim 7).

A self-assembled monolayer is a monomolecular layer consisting of a single layer of molecules, formed by immersing a substrate, on which the monolayer is formed, in a solution of an active surfactant, which forms the self-assembled monolayer. (See “self-assembled monolayer,” McGraw-Hill Dictionary of Scientific and Technical Terms, 6th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2006). An encapsulant comprised of a self-assembled monolayer has a self-limiting thickness of one layer of a molecule. (Hancer, U.S. Pat. Appln. No. 10/700,031, p. 13, ll. 12–14). A self-assembled monolayer inherently has a thickness of a molecular dimension, which is on the order of approximately 10–40 angstroms or 1–4 nm. (See *Id.*). Thus a self-assembled monolayer is 2,500 to 10,000 times thinner than a coating film of about 10 μm thick, and claims 1, 6 and 7 are not anticipated by Kurano et al.

First Named Inventor: Mehmet Hancer

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-7-

The rejection of claims 5, 11, 12 and 14 is mooted, as is the objection to claims 2-4 and 8-10. Claim 7 is amended to address an informality ("of" is added between "a surface" and "the slider body"). Claims 1-14 define over the prior art and are allowable. Reconsideration and allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

KINNEY & LANGE, P.A.

Date:

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By:



David R. Fairbairn, Reg. No. 26,047

THE KINNEY & LANGE BUILDING

312 South Third Street

Minneapolis, MN 55415-1002

Telephone: (612) 339-1863

Fax: (612) 339-6580

DRF:NPL:ks